

Conversation with 37 year old white male, Tylerton, Maryland (Transcription)

Begin M30 A(2)

<unintelligible text>

B: Oh, well that's good.

G: Yeah, we like <at?>. And so we use that boat for, on, short hauls ..hops around here and there. She's real economical and we can make money in her ever time we use her.

B: Tell me about how you got into this in the first place. I mean how did you end up in this rather than bein on the water?

G: Well, I guess I ain't no great waterman. Got to be....It's uh.. I wanted somethin more. I wanted to get ahead quicker. And a waterman works all his life and if he's lucky, he dies and has enough money to pay for his headstones and that's about it. And it's gettin so you either got to get big or get out. And there's...You're real big or you're real small into it that way. And it's so much expense and worry and stuff and still you have to depend on the weather. In this job, I know where I'm goin to work ever day...Pretty well...and uh, it's more of a sure thing. And when we started, the competition that I've got now, had uh, he just had all the business for about fifty years and wa..he got so independent people wanted a change so timing was perfect. And uh, and uh, we offered uh...when we started it was pne trip a day, six days a week, go when they wanted come when they wanted, charge what they wanted. We started...and it was slow too. So we started out with speed which

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immediately got their attention...people...and it was cheaper...better..and we treated the people like people and uh...

B: You had a schedule...

G: We had a schedule. At was probaly the biggest...that and speed..I'd say was the biggest factors...why we've succeeded.

B: Well, I noticed that the other boat..I don't remember it's name...it's not here, is it here?

G: Uh, Island Belle? Yeah. Well, when we started, they had three boats and we had one. Now we got three and they got one. And plus that, they're in debt a hundred thousand.

B: Oh, is that right?

G: So...

B: Yeah, cause I know, the other day one of the teenagers I was talkin to said, I like to go on the Captain Jason. The other one's too <unintelligible text>. Well, why did you decide to go to school <unintelligible text>

<unintelligible text>

thought I was gonna wind up waterman and they wanted me to see if I couldn't get into something a little better which was I guess then..and now I guess computers probly is the

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thing...if you don't live round one of these areas but I couldn't stand that bein dressed up. I believe that would kill me.

B: Did they require you at school...you mean to work?

G: Yeah.

B: Wearin ties and?

G: Yeah, Yeah..You know you just don't see uh, programmers and all this kind of stuff come in there in uh tore up pants yeah...so I figured that was gonna be part of it and I just couldn't go along with it. So I got back home and fooled round on the water. Tried that...And my partner, he was on a tug. Just got married. He was away two weeks and home two weeks...Kids growin up..and stuff and he wanted to be home and we got to be such close friends that uh, we just decided we were gonna do somethin. We really didn't know what we were gonna do when we first started but we knew we were gonna do somethin. And uh, and uh, we just decided hey, we're gonna try this. And we knew we'd probly, probly do all right in it. We didn't think we'd do ad good as we done but uh, we...

B: Well, as busy as you are you should be doin pretty good.

G: Well, we are. We got everything paid off. We got bout one more year on this boat but...

B: Paid off...that's terrific.

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G: Everything else is paid off. In bout another year both our homes will be paid for, so it ain't too bad from nothing to a good business and everything paid for in six years. That ain't real bad.

B: Not hardly, not hardly...

G: You've picked that word up from here, too..not hardly...

B: No...from back home..

G: Is it?

B: Uh huh.

<unintelligible text>

B: I magine, yes, we say that back home too. I magine? like that? I know <unintelligible text> was tell me about that the last time I was here and it didn't sound at all strange to me.

G: I don't know, I gues we...I'm glad I'm half crazy cause you got to be crazy to do this seven days a week.

B: You do, I agree...

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G: So it really helps a lot to be...I had a...I had a couple on here the other day, I swear I got to tell you this. They were from New Jersey. I mean a really nice lookin woman. I'd say she was probly twenty four somethin like that. maybe twenty three..twenty four..Guy...real nice lookin couple...from New Jersey ...and they got askin me about my job and I was tellin em seven days a week for six years...no vacation. And I ask em what they done and they kindly laughed. And I say, if you tell me, young as you are, and sharp as you look that you're retired, I'm gonna push you right overboard. I say, cause I can't stand it, I got five years leven months to go. And uh, and they said no, that ..they still wouldn't tell me. So after a while I said hey I want to know what kind of work you do. I said casinos and you're skimmin off the top. or what, what is it. And they said no, that they work with mental health patients. I said my God, you're in the right place. (There's all the business you want)..as a matter of fact, I'd like to know if you can help me between here and Smith Island. I know I need some help. And so...they kindly broke in...took em home too. Just like I did you. They stopped in there...took em round one thing and another. But that's how I meet a lot of people.

B: You must take a lot of folks home.

G: I do. Probly one of my best friends, he stood there on the dock one day. That was after I got to know im...he stood there before we'd met and he said, I've just got to meet that guy..I was standin there...probly bout ninety five...here I have got my blue coat on..and uh, he said looks like he'd rather be somewhere else. And he was right. But I didn't have no choice. I had to be where I was. So we got to be real close. He's from uh, from up around Lancaster. Seven kids...everone of em, you'd be proud to have.

B: Seven?

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<unintelligible text>

B: That's <unintelligible text>

these days.

G: He's got one, my God...put em ever one through college and these private....

B: How old is he?

G: He's almost forty six.

B: Is that right?

G: Worked hard all his life. Crazy just like I am. And uh, comes down here...called me the other night said how much he wished he was down here. Told me he'd like to have some crabs and I told him I'd like to have a Big Mac. And he thought I was crazier than he was

B: Yeah, that's one thing you can be thankful for...there aren't any fast food places around here. What are they buildin back over there? What's that?

G: That's another couple from up in Pennsylvania..They wanted to get out too I guess...come down here and bought that seafood business.. now they're fixin over top of it to live in there.

B: Oh, huh...looks like they're gonna have a nice place.

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G: It is. It is gonna be nice. They're gonna feel some cold air..some cold breezes, I can assure you that...right there on the water.

B: ????????

G: They had..

B: Tell me about duck trappin?

G: My God. (It ain't many people I set down and talk at with.)

B: I know about that now...I finally read bout it...

G: Yeah, but you read, you don't know..

B: You see, when you first told me about it....

G: I'd like to take you once.

B: The very first time you told me, I said well I don't <unintelligible text>

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G: Just what I told you up there in the restaurant a while ago. Like, like runnin three women the same time and trying to keep each one of them from knowin what was goin on! So maybe, maybe....

B: Now, not too many people do that anymore?//

G: Just, just a handful of us left. I'd say on the island there's one or two does it on occasion, but I mean there's one or two of us hardliners that, you know, goes right at it and, cause we.....uh, right now, right...I've been thinkin about it right this week, gettin ready for it and all.

B: When would you start doin somethin?

G: I start early. I try to get them teenagers....teenage ducks. We call em teenagers. Fore they get too smart.

B: What kind?

G: Young ones.

B: All kinds?

G: No, jist....my main one is mallards.

B: Mallards?

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G: Yeah, black mallards.

B: I guess...since nobody's really doin it anymore, does the law come around and check still?

G: Yeah, oh that would be a real feather in their cap....if you could get me if lyou were a game warden.

B: I saw a picture...I can't remember the one whothey kept showin this picture of this one game warden and I can't remember his name..in that Outlaw Gunner...where he..he'd read the signs. He'd see the little pieces of corn..

G: See..see what people don't realize is that all game wardens ain't true blue either..Now, they try and try and try to get us the right way. And they couldn't. So they went to covert activities, I'll call em. If they come up to ye and couldn't get nothin on ye, they'd take a hand ful of corn out there <unintelligible text>

home for Sunday dinner and if they put ducks on the table arrest em. And all....so you can...always been a rivalry..between Smith Islanders..especially Tylerton..up at Ewell they ain't got the nerve for it..that they got t Tylerton. That's why they got that game preserve house up at Ewell. It wouldn't lasted at Tylerton. It'd been gone. Just that simple.

B: Oh, that house that nobody's in...just sittin there?

G: Yeah. Reason they put it there cause they know people didn't have enough nerve up there...to do nothin bout it. They wouldn't put that at Tylerton. It wouldn't lasted a week.

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B: I don't really understand what's illegal about it. Is it because you bait em?

G: Yeah...they thin...they think you catch a whole lot more than you do. You know, I do it for three or four reasons. I do it mainly cause it's part of my heritage and I don't want to see it die out. And I do it cause I love em..(it's so much difference in the taste of em when you get em like that.) And...see you feed em on corn and they just are so good. You wouldn't believe how much difference (it is in taste.) And I don't sell any...I don't....used to but I don't anymore. I give em....I don't think...I grewed up some on that ideal but I believe that they're made...they're put on this earth to eat and I don't think they're made here for to be sold. So I don't..I give em. And so if anybody ever gets me for it, It'll be cause I give a pair away. They ain't gonna get me for tryin to sell em or something. At is a big fine on that and they should be. That's ...that's a..even for a Outlaw..it's what I guess you'd call me..Outlaw...outlaw Gunner..one of the few left but I don't believe in that. I don't believe in wastin stuff like at or I don't believe in sellin. Ain't gonna sell none either. Now I'll give it away. But..you know I'll get up three o'clock in the mornin. And <unintelligible text> what I'm doin, I still find time to take care of it. I love to do it that much.

B: When you say they taste better, is it because they're corn fed?

G: Yeah.

B: So you go out and leave corn for several days in a row or somethin <unintelligible text>

B: And because you've been feedin em they come back to the same place..and one day.....

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G: They're just <corn?> addicts. They're corn addicts. They go nuts over corn. They just...well you seen them this mornin. Well, that's just the way the wild ones does. See a wild ones would probly be crazier over it that that. And they let their guard down. And stuff. But still....

Yeah, give it here.

B: I bet you there are farms along the shore where people grow corn just for that reason.

G: Shore they do. But that's alright, see.

B: ??????????see that's baitin.

G: Yeah. That's different, you know. It's who you are.

B: Big farmer...Because I..

G: And see, he probly invites a..the district game...goin there to regional once in a while, or some of their friends, from Washington. They come down there..let them shoot what they want or whatever that pays the bill. Down here...they know we ain't got the means to fight em in court. So they can come down and do what they want. They know we figure it's cheaper to go ahead and pay em..get a record and let it go.

C59.B <unintelligible text> end M30A

B: Did you ever do any gunnin?

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G: Yeah.

B: You did. Was that pretty big on Smith Island ever?

G: yeah, it used to be. Uh, that refuge was a guy named <unintelligible text> owned it. He used to build planes for the government during the war. He had a plant in Baltimore.

B: Martin Marietta?

G: No...I don't know.. might be cause it was <unintelligible text> then I don't know what it is now. But my dad guided for him. And it was fine..he hunted there long as he lived. Then he donated it to the government as a refuge which is still...we still consider that rightfully ours. That weren't right <unintelligible text>